Telecommunication facilities

†*333. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of villages in the backward States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan that have been provided with telecommunication facilities, State-wise; and

(b) by when all the villages in these States are likely to be provided with telecommunication facilities, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The percentage of villages covered with telecom facility using Village Public Telephones as on 31.1.2003 is given below:—

Sl.No.	State	% of villages covered
1.	Bihar	93%
2.	Jharkhand	83%
3.	Madhya Pradesh	73%
4.	Orissa	86%
5.	Rajasthan	62%
6.	Uttar Pradesh	94%

(b) All villages will be covered with telecommunication facility using Village Public Telephones by the end of 2003 except the villages to be covered by satellite media. In Bihar, all the uncovered villages are planned to be covered by March, 2003. The uncovered villages in U.P., Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan are planned to be covered by the end of 2003 except the villages to be covered *via* the satellites. Further, Private Basic Service Operators in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have been asked to fulfil their committed roll-out obligations by 31st March, 2003; however as per available indications these are not likely to be achieved.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.